1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

443 438 the products of the border regions of Yunnan, for which Ta Li, near the junction of the main east and west and north and south caravan routes, is a convenient site. Held at the city itself it is convenient for the purchasers who have come from distant places and must lodge in the town inns. Although a large number of the peasants from the plain attend the fair, perhaps half those present are strangers from the north or east, or town merchants who come to replenish their stocks. It is this large outside element which has made the Third Month Fair well known to Chinese from other provinces and from Yunnanfu (K'un Ming) whereas the still larger fair of the autumn, the Yu Tan Hui, has not this character and is comparatively unknown even to residents in eastern Yunnan.

The Yu Tan Hui, or Fish Pool Fair, is so called because it is held on a rocky hillside overlooking the northern end of the Erh Hai lake, close to a temple where there was once a large fish tank (now dry). The site is curious, and in many ways inconvenient. There is no town nearer than Teng Ch'uan, which is five miles away, or the decayed fortress of Shang Kuan, distant only a mile, but reduced to a small village within its crumbling walls. Although there are other villages within easy walking distance of the Fair Ground, none of these have more than one or two small and dilapidated inns apart from the ordinary farmhouses of the village.

• [487] On the other hand the site has good communications. The main north caravan road from Ta Li to Li Chiang and Tibet passes through the fair ground, and the branch road to Yung Pei, the pottery centre, crosses the Erh river estuary by a stone bridge at this point. Also the fair ground is on the shores of the lake, and the large junks can be moored in deep water against the rocky shore. If the customers were mainly merchants from distant places, as at the Third Month Fair, the inconvenience of the site would be considerable, but this fair is primarily for the country people, the Min Chia of

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

between porters and muleteers, who if possible frequent different inns and do not like to travel together.

Most of the transport of goods is handled by muleteers who work a regular section of the main trade routes. Thus the longest caravan route in constant use is the road connecting Suifu on the Yang Tze, in Ssu Ch'uan with Bhamo on the Irrawady in Burma. Over this route there is constant traffic in silk from Ssu Ch'uan, which it still pays to transport for nearly a thousand miles on mule back. The silk is packed in bales at Suifu, each mule taking two bales, and is taken by the first caravan to Chao T'ung in Yunnan, about two hundred miles. There it is transferred to another set of mules and muleteers who take it on to K'un Ming (Yunnanfu), a further two hundred and fifty miles. A third caravan, often in charge of Ta Li men, takes it the next two hundred and seventy miles to Hsia Kuan, near Ta Li, this section taking thirteen days. At Hsia Kuan it is transferred to a fourth caravan, also very often run by Ta Li or Hsia Kuan men, who take it another thirteen stages to T'eng Yueh, in western Yunnan. Here it is transferred for the fifth and last time to T'eng Yueh men whose mules are acclimatised to the heat of the Burmese plains, which is very dangerous to plateau bred mules. They take it eight days down through the jungles of the border country to Bhamo, where it is shipped on river steamers for Rangoon. Suifu is generally reckoned to be thirty-two stages from K'un Ming, and Bhamo is a further thirty-four days' journey, in all sixty-six stages. This is probably the longest pack-horse trade route still in regular operation.

On the return journey these caravans take up cotton thread for the innumerable handlooms still used in Yunnan, but very many of the returning caravans have no loads, or pick up short distance local freights to pay their way, and this has been more noticeable in recent years

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

since the fall of the exchange made goods bought in Burma too dear for the Yunnan market. Another long regular route is the tea road from Pu Erh in south Yunnan, about twenty days' journey south of Ta Li, to A Tun Tze on the border of Tibet in north Yunnan, which is eighteen stages from Ta Li. At this point the tea is handed over to Tibetan caravans which take it on to Lhasa and other points in Tibet. This road passes through Hsia Kuan and Ta Li, and the section from Hsia Kuan to Wei Hsi, half-way to A Tun Tze, is usually worked by men from the Ta Li plain.

These routes are called roads, because that is the usual translation of the Chinese word "*lu*," but it would be more accurate to call them tracks or paths. At one time, probably after the Ming conquest of Yunnan, these routes were paved with blocks of stone or cobbles, the paved track being about five feet wide with a smooth line of dressed stones down the middle. Except in a few places nearest to towns this paving has either completely disappeared, or become so disjointed and broken up as to be nearly impassable. The animals naturally dislike walking on broken slippery stones set at all angles in the mud, and where possible they have trodden out a new track on one side. This practice is resented by the owners of the fields adjoining the path, and they plant strong hedges of wild roses or prickly pear to confine the mules to the old broken track. If a man rides a horse on such a path the animal, trying to avoid the broken stones and mud holes, keeps to the outside edge and carries the rider under the long trailing shoots of the rose bushes, which soon tear his clothes to ribbons. The muleteers, of course, never ride their beasts.

Such stretches of broken track between the rose and cactus hedges only account for a small part of the day's stage. With very few exceptions every stage on any road in Yunnan involves climbing a range of mountains in the

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3
Ch'iang

III. Economic Life.

1. Communications, Roads, and Bridges.

Among the Ch'iang there are no telephones, radios, or telegraph lines. There are no newspapers, and no books excepting those written by the Chinese and possessed by the few who can read them. Chinese-built roads connect the cities and towns in the valleys. Even here no wheeled vehicles can be used—only "hwagers" and sedan chairs, riding horses, and pack animals. On the Chinese roads some carry loads on the ends of bien dan or poles, but many carry their loads on their backs. Between the Ch'iang homes and villages the roads are unpaved footpaths, very narrow and often very steep. Frequently they go over or along the sides of steep precipices. It is not strange that the Ch'iang generally walk and always carry their loads on their backs. News is passed along by word of mouth, and naturally it is sometimes inaccurate.

The bridges resemble those of the Chinese and of their various neighbors in this region. A small creek may be waded, or crossed by stepping on large stones. Some bridges are merely logs or boards laid across the streams. One type of bridge is the false or corbelled arch. From both sides large timbers reach out one beyond the other, until they meet above the middle of the stream. A bridge often consists of a single bamboo cable. Two hollow wooden half-cylinders are tied securely around the cable. The person or baggage is tied to this, and when released slides half way across. Then the person pulls himself hand over hand the rest of the way, or the baggage is pulled to the opposite shore by means of a small rope. The larger rope bridges have nine or ten bamboo cables underfoot on which boards are laid, and four or more cables on each side. The longest bridges have several wooden trestles, the bridge sagging down between. As one walks over, the whole bridge shakes.

The rivers are too rapid for boats, which between Mou Chow and Yin Shiu Wan 銀秀灣 and between Wei Chow and Tsagulow are not even used as ferries.

2. Money, Marketing, Bartering, and Borrowing.

Chinese money is the currency of the Ch'iang. Until the latter part of the Manchu dynasty it was silver ingots or lump silver, then it was silver dollars. Now it is Chinese bank bills.

There is some buying and selling in the small villages. This is